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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/812,021

Applicant(s)

TANAKA ET AL.

Examiner

REZWANUL MAHMOOD

Art Unit

2164

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 July 2008.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2, 3 and 5-13 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 2, 3 and 5-13 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

DETAILED ACTION

This action is in response to the communication filed on July 7, 2008. Claims 2, 3, and 5-13 are pending in this office action.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed on July 7, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive for the following reasons:

Applicant argues that Feldman and Fukushima do not teach or even suggest the features "at least one of the objects indicative of the document pairs having relevancy being displayed while maintaining a time context of the document pairs in chronological order" and "laying out objects indicative of the documents on the relation chart, which has a time axis, based on the time information, and generating association lines for connecting between the objects of each document pair, depending on the calculated degree of relevancy".

Examiner respectfully disagrees all of the allegations as argued. Examiner, in his previous office action, gave detail explanation of claimed limitation and pointed out exact locations in the cited prior art.

Examiner is entitled to give claim limitations their broadest reasonable interpretation in light of the specification. See MPEP 2111 [R-1]

Interpretation of Claims-Broadest Reasonable Interpretation

During patent examination, the pending claims must be 'given the broadest reasonable interpretation consistent with the specification.' Applicant always has the

opportunity to amend the claims during prosecution and broad interpretation by the examiner reduces the possibility that the claim, once issued, will be interpreted more broadly than is justified. In re Prater, 162 USPQ 541,550-51 (CCPA 1969).

Feldman teaches in Column 3 lines 55-67, Column 4 lines 1-13, Column 8 lines 46- 67, Column 9 lines 1-3, Column 10 lines 45-67, Column 11 lines 1-4, Figure 1 and Figure 6 laying out objects indicative of the documents on the relation chart which has a time axis, based on the time information and generating association lines for connecting between the objects of each document pair, depending on the calculated degree of relevancy, however, Feldman does not explicitly disclose at least one of the objects indicative of the document pairs having relevancy being displayed while maintaining a time context. The Fukushima reference, however, discloses in Paragraph 177 and Figures 20-21 document relevancy being displayed while maintaining a time context. Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to modify the teachings of Feldman with the teachings of Fukushima to display relation chart composed of the objects indicative of the document pairs having relevancy being displayed while maintaining a time context of the document pairs in chronological order for generating a set of parameters for a user in determining whether a given document belongs to a specified one of a plurality of categories (Fukushige: Paragraph 22, lines 1-5).

For the above reasons, Examiner believed that rejection of the last Office action was proper.

Claim Objections

Claims 9, 12, and 13 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In line 1 of claims 9, 12 and 13, the phrase "A method" should be "A computer-implemented method". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 2, 3, and 5-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

In claims 9, 10, 11, and 12, the amended phrase "time context" is not in the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2, 3, and 5-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Feldman (US Patent 6,532,469) in view of Fukushima (US Patent Publication 2002/0152051).

With respect to claim 9, Feldman discloses a method of creating a relation chart representative of relations between a plurality of documents (Feldman: Column 1, lines 44-54; Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Figure 1; Figure 6), comprising the steps of:

analyzing contents of each of the documents and extracting feature elements including time information therefrom (Feldman: Column 1, lines 44-54; Column 2, lines 43-48; Column 3, lines 1-6 and 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Column 7, lines 29-34 and 50-67);

calculating a degree of relevancy between each document pair extracted from the documents, based on the extracted feature elements (Feldman: Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13 and 30-55);

laying out objects indicative of the documents on the relation chart, which has a time axis, based on the time information, and generating association lines for connecting between the objects of each document pair, depending on the calculated degree of relevancy (Feldman: Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Column 8, lines 46-67; Column 9, lines 1-3; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 1; Figure 6); and

displaying the relation chart composed of the objects and the association lines in

chronological order (Feldman: Column 4, lines 30-55; Figure 1; Figure 6),

However, Feldman does not explicitly disclose:

at least one of the objects indicative of the document pairs having relevancy being displayed while maintaining a time context.

The Fukushima reference, however, discloses objects indicative of the document relevancy being displayed while maintaining a time context (Fukushige: Paragraph 177, lines 1-21; Figure 20-21).

Therefore, it would have been obvious, to a person of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to modify the teachings of Feldman with the teachings of Fukushima to display relation chart composed of the objects indicative of the document pairs having relevancy being displayed while maintaining a time context of the document pairs in chronological order for generating a set of parameters for a user in determining whether a given document belongs to a specified one of a plurality of categories (Fukushige: Paragraph 22, lines 1-5).

With respect to claim 2, Feldman in view of Fukushima discloses the method according to claim 9, wherein when the association lines are generated, the association lines between predetermined ones of the document pairs are discarded for thinning-out based on the degree of relevancy of the document pair without citation relationship (Feldman: Column 1, lines 57-61; Column 9, lines 4-34; Figure 6).

With respect to claim 3, Feldman in view of Fukushima discloses the method

according to claim 9, wherein when the association lines are generated, ones of the association lines between ones of the document pairs having the citation relationship are displayed in a form of display different from a form of display in which the others of the association lines are displayed (Feldman: Column 2, lines 61-67; Column 3, lines 29-32; Column 4, lines 30-55; Figure 6).

With respect to claim 5, Feldman in view of Fukushima discloses the method according to claim 9, wherein when the objects indicative of the documents are laid out, the objects indicative of the documents are arranged along the time axis in an order based on the time information (Feldman: Column 2, lines 43-48; Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1- 13 and 30-55; Column 7, lines 29-34; Column 8, lines 46-67; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 6).

With respect to claim 6, Feldman in view of Fukushima discloses the method according to claim 9, wherein when the objects indicative of the documents are laid out, the time axis is represented in basic units each corresponding to a predetermined time period, and the order along the time axis is preserved between objects indicative of the documents belonging to different ones of the time periods (Feldman: Column 2, lines 43-48; Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13 and 30-55; Column 7, lines 29-34; Column 8, lines 46-67; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 6).

With respect to claim 7, Feldman in view of Fukushima discloses the method

according to claim 9, wherein assuming that patent documents are inputted as the plurality of documents, in extracting the feature elements, dates of application are extracted as the time information (Feldman: Column 2, lines 43-48; Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1- 13 and 30-55; Column 7, lines 29-34; Column 8, lines 46-67; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 6).

With respect to claim 8, Feldman in view of Fukushima discloses the method according to claim 9, wherein assuming that patent documents are inputted as the plurality of documents, in extracting the feature elements, dates of application and priority dates are extracted as the time information (Feldman: Column 2, lines 43-48; Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13 and 30-55; Column 7, lines 29-34; Column 8, lines 46-67; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 6), and

wherein when the objects indicative of the documents are laid out, if a date of application and a priority date have been extracted from a document, the priority date is regarded as the time information of the document (Feldman: Column 2, lines 43-48; Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13 and 30-55; Column 7, lines 29-34; Column 8, lines 46-67; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 6).

With respect to claim 10, Feldman in view of Fukushima discloses a relation chart-creating apparatus for creating a relation chart representative of relations between a plurality of documents (Feldman: Column 1, lines 44-54; Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Figure 1; Figure 6), comprising:

feature element-extracting means for analyzing contents of each of the documents and extracting feature elements including time information (Feldman: Column 1, lines 44-54; Column 2, lines 43-48; Column 3, lines 1-6 and 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Column 7, lines 29-34 and 50-67);

relevancy-calculating means for calculating a degree of relevancy between each document pair extracted from the documents, based on the extracted feature elements (Feldman: Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13 and 30-55);

layout means for laying out objects indicative of the documents on the relation chart, along a time axis, based on the time information (Feldman: Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Column 8, lines 46-67; Column 9, lines 1-3; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 1; Figure 6);

association line-generating means for generating association lines for connecting between the objects of each document pair, depending on the calculated degree of relevancy (Feldman: Column 4, lines 30-55; Figure 1; Figure 6); and

display means for displaying the relation chart composed of the objects and the association lines, at least one of the objects indicative of the document pairs having relevancy being displayed while maintaining a before-and-after relationship of the document pairs in chronological order (Feldman: Column 4, lines 30-55; Figure 1; Figure 6; Fukushima: Paragraph 177, lines 1-21; Figures 20-21).

With respect to claim 11, Feldman in view of Fukushima discloses a computer-readable recording medium that records a relation chart-creating program for creating a

relation chart representative of relations between a plurality of documents (Feldman: Column 1, lines 44-54; Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Figure 1; Figure 6), the program causing a computer to:

analyze contents of each of the documents and extract feature elements including time information therefrom (Feldman: Column 1, lines 44-54; Column 2, lines 43-48; Column 3, lines 1-6 and 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Column 7, lines 29-34 and 50-67);

calculate a degree of relevancy between each document pair extracted from the documents, based on the extracted feature elements (Feldman: Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13 and 30-55);

lay out objects indicative of the documents on the relation chart, along a time axis, based on the time information, and generate association lines for connecting between the objects of each document pair, depending on the calculated degree of relevancy (Feldman: Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Column 8, lines 46-67; Column 9, lines 1-3; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 1; Figure 6); and

display the relation chart composed of the objects and the association lines, at least one of the objects indicative of the document pairs having relevancy being displayed while maintaining time context of the document pairs in chronological order (Feldman: Column 4, lines 30-55; Figure 1; Figure 6; Fukushima: Paragraph 177, lines 1-21; Figures 20-21).

With respect to claim 12, Feldman in view of Fukushima discloses a method comprising:

extracting feature elements including time information from each document to calculate a degree of relevancy between each pair of document (Feldman: Column 1, lines 44-54; Column 2, lines 43-48; Column 3, lines 1-6 and 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Column 7, lines 29-34 and 50-67);

laying out in chronological order on a relation chart objects that indicate the documents having relevancy (Feldman: Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Column 8, lines 46- 67; Column 9, lines 1-3; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 1; Figure 6); and

displaying the relation chart while maintaining a time context of document pairs having relevancy in chronological order (Feldman: Column 4, lines 30-55; Figure 1; Figure 6; Fukushima: Paragraph 177, lines 1-21; Figures 20-21).

With respect to claim 13, Feldman in view of Fukushima discloses a method comprising:

calculating a degree of relevancy between document pairs responsive to feature elements having time information extracted from each analyzed document (Feldman: Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Column 8, lines 46- 67; Column 9, lines 1-3; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 1; Figure 6); and

displaying a relational chart illustrating documents having relevancy and lines connected between the each document pair according to the calculated degree of

relevancy and maintaining a time relation of the document pairs in chronological order (Feldman: Column 3, lines 55-67; Column 4, lines 1-13; Column 8, lines 46- 67; Column 9, lines 1-3; Column 10, lines 45-67; Column 11, lines 1-4; Figure 1; Figure 6; Fukushima: Paragraph 177, lines 1-21; Figures 20-21).

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The Kumar reference (US Patent 5,982,383) teaches about generating graphics charts. The Lavoie reference (US Publication 2005/0015716) teaches about a document change identifier.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to REZWANUL MAHMOOD whose telephone number is (571)272-5625. The examiner can normally be reached on M - F 10 A.M. - 5 P.M..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles Rones can be reached on (571)272-4085. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/R. M./
Examiner, Art Unit 2164
October 27, 2008

/Charles Rones/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2164